



Leaders Can Improve Dental Readiness

- **Encourage your soldiers to be a “First Class Soldier” (Dental Class 1).**
 1. Assign a Unit Dental Liaison.
 2. Use low operational requirement periods to ensure all personnel maintain good oral health status.
 3. Enforce regulations for dental care. Have Dental Liaison coordinate appointments with the dental clinic for Dental Class 3 and 4 Soldiers.
 4. Have 1SG follow up with the dental clinic to ensure soldiers follow up with treatment
- **Review Oral Hygiene during unit field hygiene and sanitation training.**
 1. Floss once a day to remove bacteria and food in between teeth, where a toothbrush can't reach.
 2. Brush two or three times every day, especially before sleeping. Use a soft toothbrush. Brush for about 2 minutes using a gentle, circular motion and fluoride toothpaste.
 3. Do not rinse, eat or drink for 30 minutes after brushing. This gives the fluoride time to protect your teeth.
- **Watch what your Soldiers put in their mouths.**
 1. Encourage Soldiers to use Combat Stress Control techniques to deal with the stress of deployment, rather than harmful oral habits.
 2. Limit sugar- sweetened or corn syrup-sweetened drinks, such as sodas, sports drinks, and energy drinks.
 3. Limit sugary, sticky, or starchy between-meal snacks.
 4. Eat healthy foods from the five major food groups to get the vitamins and minerals that your mouth needs to stay healthy. Vitamins A, C & E, all the B's, carotene, and Calcium, Iron, and Zinc.
 5. Use gum or mints that contain xylitol as the first ingredient. Xylitol is a natural sweetener that prevents cavities.
 6. Quit or cut back on tobacco use. It can cause tooth decay, gum disease, and oral cancer.

For more information, visit:

<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/OralFitnessLeadersPage.aspx>

